

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

675

### 1. Name of Property

historic name: **Como Commercial Historic District**  
other names/site number:

### 2. Location

street & number: **Roughly bounded by Elder Frank Ward Street on the west and North Main Street on the east. On the north bounded by Church Avenue and on the south by Oak Avenue.**

not for publication    n/a   

city or town: **Como**

state: **Mississippi**

code **MS**

county: **Panola** code **107**

vicinity    n/a   

zip code **38619**

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this   X   nomination    request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property   X   meets    does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant    nationally    statewide   X   locally. (    See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

*R. Roberts*

*5-19-2008*

Signature of certifying official

Date

State Historic Preservation Officer

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property    meets    does not meet the National Register criteria. (    See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register  
   See continuation sheet.

   determined eligible for the  
National Register  
   See continuation sheet.

   determined not eligible for the  
National Register

   removed from the National Register

   other (explain):   

*R* Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

*[Signature]*

*7/10/2008*

**Como Commercial Historic District**

Name of Property

**Panola, Mississippi**

County and State

**5. Classification**

Ownership of Property:		Category of Property:		Number of Resources within Property: (Do not include previously listed resources in the count)		
X	private		buildings			
X	public-local	X	district	Contributing	Noncontributing	
	public-State		site	20	16	buildings
X	public-Federal		structure		1	sites
			object			structures
				20	17	objects
						Total

**Name of related multiple property listing:**  
The Architecture of Andrew Johnson in North Mississippi

**Number of contributing resources previously National Register:**

2

**6. Function or Use****Historic Functions:**

Domestic: single dwelling  
 Commerce/Trade: business  
 Commerce/Trade: financial institution  
 Commerce/Trade: restaurant  
 Commerce/Trade: specialty store  
 Government: city hall  
 Government: post office  
 Health Care: clinic  
 Industry/Processing/Extraction: communications facility  
 Industry/Processing/Extraction: warehouse  
 Religion: religious facility

**Current Functions:**

Domestic: single dwelling  
 Commerce/Trade: business  
 Commerce/Trade: financial institution  
 Commerce/Trade: professional  
 Commerce/Trade: restaurant  
 Commerce/Trade: specialty store  
 Education: library  
 Government: city hall  
 Government: fire station  
 Government: police station  
 Government: post office  
 Health Care: clinic  
 Industry/Processing/Extraction: communications facility  
 Industry/Processing/Extraction: warehouse  
 Landscape: park  
 Religion: religious facility

**7. Description****Architectural Classification(s):**

Gothic  
 Neo-Classical Revival  
 Colonial Revival  
 Bungalow/Craftsman  
 Ranch

**Materials:**

foundation: brick  
 concrete  
 roof: asphalt  
 asbestos  
 metal  
 walls: weatherboard  
 brick  
 stucco  
 metal  
 other:

**Narrative Description:**

See Continuation Sheets

Como Commercial Historic District  
Name of Property

Panola, Mississippi  
County and State

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**10. Geographical Data**

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Acreage of Property: Approx 25 acres

UTM References:	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing	
A	16	229900	3822950	C	16	229860	3822500
B	16	229999	3822500	D	16	229740	3822940

\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

**Verbal Boundary Description** See continuation sheet.

**Boundary Justification:** See continuation sheet.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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name/title:	David Preziosi / Executive Director	date:	March 14, 2008
organization:	Mississippi Heritage Trust	telephone:	(601) 354-0200
street & number:	P.O. Box 577	zip code:	39205
city or town:	Jackson	state:	MS

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**Additional Documentation**

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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**Property Owner(s)**

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name:		telephone:	
street & number:		zip code:	
city or town:	state:		

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**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

- X A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- X C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Areas of Significance

Architecture  
Community Planning and Development

Period of Significance

1872 - 1958

Significant Dates

1872  
1882  
c. 1899  
1895

Significant Person(s)

Criteria Considerations:

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Cultural Affiliation(s)

N/A

Architect/Builder

J.B. Cook  
Andrew Johnson  
John Johnson

Narrative Statement of Significance:

See continuation sheets.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

See continuation sheet.

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository:  
Mississippi Department of Archives and History

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Panola County, Mississippi

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**NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION**

The Como Commercial Historic District is composed of thirty-eight buildings and one site, which lie roughly east of the railroad tracks bordering North Main Street, west of Elder Frank Ward Street, north of Oak Avenue, and south of Church Avenue in Como, Panola County, Mississippi. The district includes mostly commercial row buildings with two religious structures, three residential structures, a few small scale agricultural industrial buildings, a medical clinic, public library, and municipal buildings. The character of the district is that of a small commercial area that grew around the former railroad depot for Como and as the center of the town providing commercial, municipal, and religious functions. The district has a strong commercial character to it with very similar commercial row buildings of mostly the same scale, massing and detailing. The row of commercial buildings is terminated on both ends by religious and residential structures.

Como has always been a small community and remains so to this day. The town of Como was formed around the Mississippi and Tennessee Railroad line that was built through the area in 1856. Thus the development of the commercial area of Como was centered on the former depot for the railroad line and grew from there but never more than three blocks long. Since the town was small the commercial development only occurred on the west side of the railroad tracks with the largest section of residential development occurring on the east side of the tracks with a smaller amount of residential development west of the commercial area. Those residential areas are not included in this nomination. Agricultural industrial uses, such as warehouses, lumber yards, etc. occurred west of the commercial area of Como along Elder Frank Ward Street (formerly West Street).

The Como Commercial Historic District is comprised of two streets running in a north-south direction, North Main Street and Elder Frank Ward Street (formerly West Street). There are no streets in the district that run in an east-west direction other than Oak Avenue which forms the southern boundary and Church Avenue which forms the northern boundary of the district. There are two alley ways that cross between North Main Street and Elder Frank Ward Street. Both of the north-south streets show up on the first Sanborn map of Como in 1886 although on the map they do not extend all the way to Church and Oak Avenues which could be due to a lack of structures to map at the ends of those streets. On the 1897 Sanborn map the entire historic district area is mapped. The blocks between North Main Street and Elder Frank Ward Street are very uniform in width size with a width of 208 feet however the lengths of the blocks vary.

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Within the blocks the lots are divided into twenty-five foot parcels that run the depth of the block. Some of the lots have been combined over the years with the churches at each end of the district on larger combined lots. There is a very regular setback pattern along North Main Street as the majority of the street is commercial structures that share partition walls with facades that have the same setback. The remainder of the buildings on the street, the two churches and clinic, are set back a little further than the commercial buildings. Elder Frank Ward Street has more random setbacks for the few buildings in the district along that street. The topography of the district is relatively flat. There is a degree of casual landscaping around the churches and in a small pocket park next to the library. There are a few trees in planters in front of some of the commercial buildings along North Main Street.

There are two important religious structures in the district built during the period of significance. One is the Holy Innocents Episcopal Church at 311 North Main Street (#36) built in 1872 in the Carpenter Gothic style and the Como Methodist Church at 101 North Main Street (#5) built in 1912 in the Neo-Classical Revival style. There is also an important municipal building at 204 North Main Street (#19) built circa 1935 which used to be the Como City Hall and is now the Como Police Station. Another significant building is the Como Clinic (#6) at 103 North Main Street built circa 1950 as a clinic which is the continued use today.

There are two properties in the proposed Como Commercial Historic District that have been previously listed on the National Register. The commercial building at 215 North Main Street (#24a) was listed in the National Register in 1987 as part of a multiple property nomination for 'The Architecture of Andrew Johnson in Mississippi.' The Holy Innocents Episcopal Church at 311 North Main Street (#36) was individually listed in the National Register in 1997.

The majority of the contributing resources in the district are representative of commercial, religious, and residential development typical in Mississippi for the time. The brick commercial buildings are all very similar in style and construction with a few minor exceptions. Most of the commercial buildings were constructed between the late 1890s and the 1920s. The churches were very high style for their period of construction. The three houses in the district each vary in size, style, and construction dates but are all one-story and are good architectural examples for the time they were built. All of the residential buildings retain a high level of integrity. Major architectural styles represented in the Como Commercial Historic District are those of the late nineteenth to mid-twentieth century and include: Carpenter Gothic, Neo-Classical Revival, Colonial Revival, Bungalow/Craftsman, and Ranch.

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The oldest commercial buildings in the district are a row of four buildings from 219 to 225 North Main Street (#26 - #29) built by 1897. The buildings are all one-story and have similar brickwork and detailing. The oldest non-commercial building in the district is the Holy Innocents Episcopal Church at 311 North Main Street (#36) built in 1872.

The three houses in the district were all constructed in different styles and dates. The house at 308 Elder Frank Ward Street (#4) was built in 1919 in the Craftsman/Bungalow style as the rectory for the Holy Innocents Episcopal Church across the street. The house at 309 North Main Street (#35) was built around 1920 in the Colonial Revival style. The other residential structure is 100 Oak Avenue (#37) constructed in 1954 in the Ranch style as the rectory for the Como Methodist Church.

Along Elder Frank Ward Street there are several buildings tied to the former agricultural and industrial aspects of Como. There is a large concrete building at 306 Elder Frank Ward Street (#3) constructed around 1935 that was a seed warehouse and later used for lumber storage. There are also two wood frame metal clad warehouse structures that face Frank Elder Ward Street although they belong to buildings which face North Main Street. The one at 215 North Main Street (#24b) was constructed circa 1910 and the one at 221 North Main Street (#27b) was constructed circa 1930.

Throughout the district several of the commercial buildings have been updated over the years with new entry doors and windows. Several of the commercial buildings in the 100 block of North Main Street have had recent façade renovations making them non-contributing. The remaining non-contributing elements in the district have either been constructed after the period of significance or built during the period of significance and have been heavily altered and no longer retain their historic integrity.

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**Inventory of Resources**

C = Contributing element; NC = Non-contributing element  
PL = Previously listed on the National Register

The inventory is arranged alphabetically by street name in ascending numerical order. Buildings are classified as “contributing” (c) or “non-contributing” (NC) to the historic character of the district. Properties that have already been listed on the National Register are designated as “previously listed” (PL).

**Elder Frank Ward Street**

1. C 109 Elder Frank Ward Street 1950

One-story, rectangular plan brick structure with front facing gable roof of asphalt shingles on a brick foundation. Façade is single bay with a single leaf metal door. The projecting front facing gable roof entry canopy is supported by knee braces with a segmental arch to the lower portion of the gable. There is a concrete stoop and steps. One fixed window and a door on the south side. The building has simple wooden board entablatures on the east and west elevations terminating in cornice returns at the base of the roof gable. An emergency generator is located under a fenced-in open shed on the east side. There is a wood louvered vent in the gable of the main roof.

2. NC 227 Elder Frank Ward Street c. 2000  
Faith Temple Church of God in Christ

One-story, brick veneer religious building with cross gable roof of composition shingles on a concrete foundation. Projecting front facing gable roof entry porch supported by wood turned columns on a concrete porch deck. Façade is two-bay (D, D). The main entry doors are under the entry porch and are double-leaf metal clad wood with six raised panels. The other door is the same but only a single-leaf. The front facing gable has a louvered vent in the gable and wood panel siding. At the rear of the rectangular sanctuary section are two projecting gable roof wings. Three 4/4 metal frame single hung sash windows are located on either side of the sanctuary. Side doors are located on the east or front sides of the two projecting wings. The eaves are boxed.



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3. C 306 Elder Frank Ward Street c. 1935

Large, one-story, brick and concrete lumberyard complex is basically rectangular in plan, with solid exterior walls and open bays on the interior facing an interior courtyard. On the street side, a higher concrete block central section with side facing gable roof of metal panels contains an office wing with wood-and-glass doors on the north side and a central open gateway. The side and rear sections are covered with gable roofs of metal panels and contain bays for storing lumber and coal. Windows are all boarded and have angled cast stone sills. [Photo #1]

4. C 308 Elder Frank Ward Street 1919 Craftsman Bungalow

One-story, wood frame Craftsman Bungalow with hip roof of composition shingles on a brick and stucco covered foundation. Full width undercut screened porch supported by tapered wood columns with wood bead board panel balustrade between the columns on a wood porch deck. Façade is three-bay (W, D, W) with horizontal wood lap siding and corner boards. Windows are 9/1 wood double hung sash. The front door is wood with eighteen lights and an eight light transom. There is a hip roof dormer with five openings with the center opening a louvered vent and the other openings nine light wood windows. A small hipped extension at the rear forms a mudroom. Projecting eaves with exposed rafter tips. This house was constructed as the rectory for the Holy Innocents Episcopal Church across the street. The house was designed by architect John Johnson of Sardis and built by E.L. Mothershed of Como.

**North Main Street**

5. C 101 North Main Street 1912 Neo-Classical  
Como United Methodist Church John Gaisford, architect

One-and-a-half story Neo-Classical religious building with a basilica or Greek cross form. Cross gable roof of composition shingles with a large octagonal wooden dome over the intersection with a metal clad roof topped by a cross on an octagonal cupola with louvered vents. The drum of the dome has arched wood windows with ten lights each. The front façade has a central front facing gable roof with two lower hip roof setbacks. Under the main gable is a recessed entry supported by two Ionic columns in antis. Above the entry is a tri-partite wood arched window with leaded and stained glass and a brick soldier course lintel with cast stone keystone. In the recess porch is a double-leaf wooden-door entry with a single light over a raised panel and matching sidelights. Above that is a panel inscribed with 'COMO METHODIST CHURCH'. Above the panel are three wood frame stained glass lights. Monumental concrete steps with brick sidewalls to the entry. Additional front windows on the setbacks are paired rectangular wood frame stained glass

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wood frame stained glass with a cast stone panel above and arched wood stained glass windows with brick soldier course lintels with cast stone keystones above the panel. Side windows are a combination of paired rectangular wood frame stained glass windows and arched wood frame stained glass windows. Frieze around the building of projecting cast stone trim. There is a denticulated cornice under the eaves which are boxed. [Photo #2]

6. C 103 North Main Street c. 1950

One-story, brick veneer medical clinic with cross gable roof of composition shingles on a concrete foundation. Projecting entry porch under the front facing gable supported by brick columns on a concrete porch deck. Façade is five-bay (W-paired, W, D, W, W-paired). The paired windows are 4/4 metal frame single hung sash and the non-paired windows are 6/6 metal frame single hung sash. The front door is wood with nine lights and sidelights of twenty ribbed glass blocks. There is rough stucco in the gable with a circular louvered vent with keystones at the four compass points. The eaves are boxed. An original rear T section extends back to join a side-gabled rear wing addition. The extensions have mixed fenestration; a double-leaf entry at the rear provides access to the rear parking area. A small vinyl sided shed section at the rear of the front main block on the north side has a single-leaf door to the side parking area.

7. NC 104 North Main Street 1977  
Emily Jones Pointer Public Library

One-story, rectangular plan brick veneer library structure with a hip roof of asphalt shingles on a concrete foundation. Partial width undercut entry porch supported by wood Tuscan columns on a brick porch deck with brick steps. Façade is seven-bay (W, W, W, D, W, W, W). The two outer windows are metal frame picture windows with nine lights and segmental arch to the top. The other windows are 6/6 metal frame single hung sash with applied louvered shutters. They have angled brick soldier course lintels with a central cast stone keystone. The front door is wood double-leaf with six recessed panels flanked by five light sidelights and a fanlight transom. The eaves are boxed.

8. NC Park c. 1980

Small pocket park occupies a parcel of land next to the Emily Jones Pointer Public Library. It features a mosaic tile walk leading to a central fountain from which radiate two quarter circular concrete areas with four brick planter boxes with crepe myrtles. Two flower beds bordered in stone are located on the west or rear side. Sidewalks lead south to the library and north. A birdbath with a plaque in memory of Bruelle Playlock Wooten is located at the west end.

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9. NC 105 North Main Street c. 2005

One-story, rectangular plan brick commercial row building with two store bays built in front of a large metal warehouse. Brick storefront features two large multi-light display windows in each bay flanking double-leaf wood entry doors with nine lights over a horizontal panel. The parapet features corbelled brick coping and two large recessed panels outlined in brick, one over each storefront and each with three rectangular iron vents. Large metal warehouse section at the rear has a front facing gable roof and a single-leaf metal door and a roll-up metal garage door on the south wall.

10. C 106 North Main Street c. 1935

One-story, generally rectangular plan brick veneer structure with a low pyramidal composition shingle roof on a brick foundation. There is a slight projecting roof extension over the front door and concrete stoop. Façade is four-bay (D, W-paired, W-paired, W-paired). The two sets of windows in the front projection are paired fixed wood frame lights and the windows in the side addition are 1/1 wood double hung sash with applied louvered shutters. The front door is metal clad wood with nine lights over two raised panels. A one-room extension juts from the rear of the south side, and a short pavilion extends from the north. The eaves are boxed.

11. NC 107 North Main Street c. 1915

One-story, rectangular plan brick commercial row building has a plain painted brick storefront with three-bays (W, D, W). The storefront was remodeled with two fixed twelve light display windows flanking a double-leaf wood entry door with four lights over a raised panel. The plain parapet has simple brick coping.

12. NC 109 North Main Street c. 1915

One-story, rectangular plan brick veneer commercial row building that has recently has been heavily altered with a new façade configuration and new brick veneer. It is now five-bays (W, D, W, W, D). Windows are wood frame with a single light and a single light transom. The doors are double-leaf wood with six lights over a raised panel and a single light transom above. The stepped parapet has metal coping. [Photo #3]

13. NC 111 North Main Street c. 1910

One-story, rectangular plan painted brick commercial row building. Storefront has been altered with horizontal wood siding infill and replacement windows and doors, but still retains its original cast-iron pilasters. Façade is two-bays (D, W-paired). The paired windows are 6/6 metal frame single hung sash windows with applied louvered shutters. The front entry door is

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metal clad wood with four raised panels and a leaded glass fanlight. There is a metal frame glass storm door. Parapet has corbelled brick coping and three recessed panels outlined in brick. North side parapet is stepped. Three small rectangular metal vents in the parapet. Joined at rear by concrete block and corrugated metal additions, each with roll-up metal doors on south side facing interior parking area.

14. C 201 North Main Street c. 1927

Two-story, rectangular plan brick commercial row building. The first floor façade has three bays all with single light wood frame storefront windows over wood panels with two light transoms. Two original cast-iron columns separate the storefront bays. The entrance to the building is through the neighboring building as the interiors are combined. There is a one-story steel frame gallery on the front of the building supported by steel box columns. The second floor façade has two wood-and-glass doors that open onto the gallery used for restaurant seating. The gallery has metal box column posts that match the supports with a metal rail between. The parapet has a corbelled cornice and a recessed sign panel outlined in brick. A mural for Coca Cola and J.M. Wardlaw Planters is on the south wall, which also has a door and three windows, all boarded.

15. NC 202 North Main Street c. 1985  
Como Volunteer Fire Department

One-story metal frame fire station with a side facing slightly pitched gable roof of metal panels on a concrete foundation. The front façade is brick veneer with four-bays (D, D, D, D) with all door openings having large metal roll up doors. The sides and rear of the building are clad in vertical metal panel siding. A single-leaf metal door is located on the north side near the front.

16. C 203 North Main Street c. 1910

One-story, rectangular plan brick commercial row building. The façade is three-bay (W, D, W) separated by the original cast-iron pilasters. The storefront windows are wood frame with a single light above wood panels and two light transoms. The entry door is wood double-leaf with twelve lights each, sidelights, and a two light transom above with an additional two light transom above that. The parapet features a corbelled brick cornice and three recessed panels outlined in brick in the entablature. The steel gallery from 201 North Main Street extends in front of 203 North Main Street and has the same detailing. The rear of the building is faced in plywood.

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17. C 204 North Main Street c. 1935  
Como Police Station (formerly Como City Hall)

One-story, brick municipal building that is rectangular in plan. The façade is six-bay (W, D, W, D, D, W). The windows are 6/6 metal frame single hung sash. The doors are all metal clad wood with nine lights over four raised triangular panels. The center bay was apparently once a garage bay and has been infilled with horizontal wood lap siding with and corner boards and a new door. The brick parapet is plain with a solid course brick frieze with a cast stone cap. There is a raised central area to the parapet for a sign area with "CITY HALL" inscribed in the cast stone. An arched cloth awning extends across the front façade. A small metal shed on a raised brick foundation with a single-leaf door and fixed windows is located on the north side.

18. C 205 North Main Street c. 1910

One-story, stucco covered commercial row building with a rectangular plan. The façade is three-bays (W, D, W) separated by cast-iron pilasters. The storefront windows are wood frame with a single light and a four light transom over a low wood wall with two recessed panels. The entry door is double-leaf and recessed from the storefront windows. The doors are wood with a single light over a matching panel to the ones under the windows. The front door also has a four light transom. There is a projecting canopy supported by chains that extends the length of the building. The parapet has three recessed panels each with a small cast iron vent. [Photo #6]

19. NC 206 North Main Street c. 1970  
Como City Hall

One-story, brick veneer square plan municipal building with a shallow pyramidal asphalt shingle roof with a small wooden cupola with louvered vents and also a pyramidal roof. There is a full width undercut entry porch supported by wood box columns with capitals and bases on a concrete slab porch deck. The ends of the porch are enclosed with brick walls. The façade is five-bay (W, D, W, D, W). The windows are 6/6 metal frame single hung sash with angled brick sills. The doors are wood with nine lights over four raised triangular panels and surrounded by fluted pilasters supporting an entablature. There is a 2/2 metal frame single hung sash window on the north side, and three paired 3/3 metal frame single hung sash windows on the east or rear side. A plain wooden board entablature encircles the building.

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20. C 207 North Main Street c. 1910  
One-story, stucco covered commercial row building with a rectangular plan. The façade is five-bays (W, W, D, W, W) in a stepped recessed pattern. The windows are single light plate glass with metal frames over low brick walls. The door is a single-leaf wood door with a single light over a recessed panel. Two brick columns support the front façade wall above which is a transom row with twelve lights. There is a projecting canopy supported by chains that extends the length of the building. The parapet has a recessed sign panel with three small cast iron vents below the sign board.
21. NC 209 North Main Street 2005  
Como Post Office  
One-story, rectangular plan new brick Post Office infilled in the commercial row. The façade is nine-bay (W, W, W, W, D, W, W, W, D). The windows are aluminum frame with two fixed lights and outlined in a different color brick than the main facade. The entry door is in the center and is a single light aluminum frame storefront door with sidelights and a transom. The door on the end is an aluminum frame storefront door with a transom. In the parapet there are nine segmental arched panels outlined in a different color brick than the main façade with brick inserts in a basket weave pattern. The central panel is larger and is painted brick with applied letters spelling "COMO MISSISSIPPI 33619 U.S. POST OFFICE." There is a soldier course frieze at the top of the parapet. Double-leaf metal doors at the rear open to a loading area. [Photo #7]
22. C 211 North Main Street c. 1900  
One-story, rectangular plan brick commercial row building. The façade is seven-bays (W, W, W, D, W, W, W) separated by cast-iron columns. The storefront windows are wood frame with a single light and a single light transom separated by a wood panel. The windows sit on a low brick wall. The double-leaf entry with wood doors each have a single light over a single raised panel. The parapet features an ornate corbelled brick cornice with a course of brick set in at an angle and six recessed panels outlined in brick in the entablature each with a small cast-iron segmentally arched vent and arched soldier course lintels. There are two cast-iron star tie rods visible in the parapet. Two sets of doors (one double-leaf, one single-leaf) provide access at the rear.
23. NC 213 North Main Street c. 1900  
One-story, rectangular plan brick commercial row building with a heavily altered storefront with new brick infill and a replacement door. The façade is five-bays (W, D, W, W, W) with the first three-bays on the left separated by cast-iron pilasters and the other two separated by brick. The two windows on the left are wood frame with a single light and a transom. The other windows

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three-bays on the left separated by cast-iron pilasters and the other two separated by brick. The two windows on the left are wood frame with a single light and a transom. The other windows are wood frame with a single light. The front door is wood with a single light over a single raised panel with horizontal wood lap siding in the transom. The building has an ornate entablature with a corbelled brick cornice with a single course of brick set in at an angle and an entablature with three recessed panels outlined in brick each with a small cast-iron segmentally arched vent and arched soldier course lintels. A shed-roofed section extends across the rear of the building.

24a. PL 215 North Main Street c. 1899

Two-story, rectangular plan brick commercial row building. The façade is four-bay (D, W, D, W) separated by cast-iron columns. The storefront windows are wood frame single light with a transom over a wood wall with a single recessed panel. The wood door on the left is single-leaf with five recessed panels and provides access to the second floor. The storefront door is recessed and is double-leaf wood frame with a single light over a single recessed panel. The upper level has four evenly spaced 4/4 wood double hung sash segmental arch windows with end brick lintels and stone sills. The brick parapet features a corbelled brick cornice and four paneled recesses each with a small cast-iron segmentally arched vent and arched soldier course lintels. There is also a sign board below the parapet recesses outlined in brick. A shed canopy with a metal panel roof extends across the front of the façade and is supported on slender metal poles. The building was listed on the National Register in 1987 as part of a multiple property nomination for 'The Architecture of Andrew Johnson in Mississippi.'

24b. C Warehouse c. 1910

One-story, wood frame warehouse with a front facing gable roof of corrugated metal panels on a brick pier foundation. The building is also sided in corrugated metal panels. There is a small modern metal storage shed attached to the side of the building. There are two openings on the façade facing the alley with the lower a double-leaf corrugated panel door and the upper a single corrugated panel door.

25. C 217 North Main Street c. 1905

One-story, rectangular plan painted brick commercial row building. The façade is three-bay (W, D, W) separated by cast-iron columns. The storefront windows are single light with a two light transom. The double-leaf entry are wood doors with a single light over a panel. The parapet features a dogtooth entablature and corbelled brick coping and a large rectangular recessed panel

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outlined in brick. There are two small rectangular cast-iron vents in the parapet. A modern pent cloth awning extends from the front.

26. C 219 North Main Street 1897

One-story, rectangular plan painted brick commercial row building. The façade is three-bay (W, D, W) separated by brick. The storefront windows are wood frame single light. The entry door is single-leaf with a steel frame and single light in a recessed entry. The parapet features a corbelled brick cornice with a single course of brick set in at an angle, and three recessed panels outlined by a row of bricks in the entablature. Each panel has a small rectangular cast-iron vent. A shed canopy with a metal panel roof extends across the front of the façade with a scalloped valance and is supported on slender metal poles.

27a. NC 221 North Main Street 1897

One-story, rectangular plan painted brick commercial row building with an altered façade. The façade is three-bay (W, W, D) separated by cast-iron pilasters and later infilled with brick and modern fixed single light windows with an aluminum frame. The front door is wood with a single light. The parapet features a corbelled brick cornice with a single course of brick set in at an angle, and two recessed panels outlined by a row of bricks in the entablature. Each panel has a small rectangular cast-iron vent. A shed canopy with a metal panel roof extends across the front of the façade supported on slender metal poles.

27 b. C Warehouse c. 1930

One-story, wood frame warehouse with a front facing gable roof of metal panels on a concrete pier foundation. The building is sided in corrugated metal panels. There are two window openings on the façade with closed corrugated paneled shutters. Projecting eaves with exposed rafter tips.

28. C 223 North Main Street 1897

One-story, rectangular plan painted brick commercial row building. The façade is three-bay (W, D, W) with each bay separated by wood paneled frames. The storefront windows are wood frame single light with a transom. The entry is double-leaf wood frame with a single light over a panel. The parapet features a corbelled brick cornice with a single course of brick set in at an angle, and three recessed panels outlined by a row of bricks in the entablature. The center recessed panel is covered by a sign. Each panel has a small rectangular cast-iron vent. A shed



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canopy with a metal panel roof extends across the front of the façade supported on slender metal poles.

29. NC 225 North Main Street 1897

One-story, rectangular plan painted brick commercial row building. The façade is three-bay (W, D, W) separated by brick. The storefront has been altered with a window on the left replaced by a wood panel with a 6/6 metal frame single hung sash inserted in the panel. The other storefront window is metal frame with a single light. The front door is aluminum frame with a single light and sidelights. Transoms are visible but have been covered by metal panels. The parapet features a corbelled brick cornice with three paneled recesses outlined in brick each with a small rectangular cast iron vent. The center recess is covered by a sign. There is a projecting canopy supported by metal rods across the façade. The north side wall features a stepped parapet descending in stages from the street façade. A single-leaf door provides access to the rear.

30. NC 227 North Main Street c. 1900

One-story, rectangular plan brick commercial building with two storefronts combined in a circa 1990 remodeling. The altered façade is three-bay (D, W-paired, W-tripled) separated by round cast-iron columns (which could have been original and relocated in the remodel) and brick. The storefront windows are aluminum frame each with a single light and two light transom. The entry door is also aluminum frame with a single light, sidelights, and a two light transom. There is a stepped brick parapet with the center step slightly arched. A marble sign inscribed with "STATE BANK OF COMO" is centered on the upper wall above the pent canvas awning. The side walls have stepped parapets descending from the front. A drive-in window has been added to the north side of the structure. There are three large brick planters in front of the building

31. C 229-231 North Main Street c. 1890

One-story, rectangular plan painted brick commercial row building. The façade is four-bays (W, D-paired, D, D) separated by three original fluted cast-iron pilasters. The wood frame storefront window is a single light with a low wood wall with a single recessed panel below and a two light transom above. The doors on the left are a combination of a wood frame with two lights over a single projecting panel and a fixed wood door with a single light over a recessed panel. The other doors are wood frame with two lights over a single raised panel and a fixed wood door with three lights over a raised panel. There are transoms above all of the doors. The brick parapet has a recessed panel outlined in brick in the entablature with two small rectangular cast-iron vents. Two single-leaf wood-and-glass doors provide access to the rear. [Photo #8]

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32. NC 233 North Main Street c. 1900

One-story, rectangular plan brick commercial row building which has been altered with a storefront infilled with new brick, new windows and a door. Façade is three-bay (W, D, W). The windows are single light aluminum frame with decorative security bars and the front door is wood with a single light over a single recessed panel. The intact parapet features a corbelled brick cornice and an entablature with three recesses outlined in brick. The outer two recesses have segmentally arched cast-iron vents. There is a suspended shed roof canopy with a composition shingle roof supported by chains. The south wall has a stepped parapet descending from the front. A rear doorway is boarded up.

33. NC 235 North Main Street c. 1900

One-story, rectangular plan painted brick commercial row building with a substantially altered storefront. The façade is three-bays (W, D, W) with two original octagonal cast-iron columns remaining. What was once the storefront has been filled with brick siding and single light fixed windows with a wood panel below and applied louvered shutters. The entry door is wood with six raised panels with a pilaster surround and an entablature. Metal frame outer glass storm door. There is an arched fabric awning over the door. The parapet features a corbelled cornice and an entablature with three recessed panels outlined in brick each with small rectangular cast-iron vents. The center panel is cover with a decorative wood panel with a bas-relief scrollwork design. The north side parapet is stepped, descending from the façade. One part of the original roof has been removed to expose a courtyard. The rear wall is clad in metal siding, not original.

34. NC 307 North Main Street c. 1980

One-story, rectangular plan metal frame commercial building. The façade is two-bays (W, D) with brick veneer siding. The window is aluminum frame with a single fixed light. The door is also aluminum frame with a single light. The parapet has a projecting Mansard roof with metal panels. The shallow front facing gable metal roof is concealed behind parapet. The sides and rear of the building are clad in metal panels. There is a roll-up metal garage door at the rear.

35. C 309 North Main Street 1920 Colonial Revival

One-story, brick veneer Colonial Revival residence with a pyramidal roof of asphalt shingles on a brick foundation. Projecting front facing gable roof entry porch supported by wood Tuscan columns on a tiled curved entry stoop with tiled steps and brick surrounding walls. The columns support an arched entablature. The façade is seven-bays (Sunroom, W, W, D, W, W, Carport). The sunroom has four 9/1 wood double hung sash windows with recessed panels below. The other windows are 12/1 wood double hung sash with cast stone sills and soldier course brick

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lintels. The entry door is wood with a single light over a single recessed panel with matching sidelights and a seven light transom. There is a metal frame screen door. The carport is supported by wood Tuscan columns on brick bases with cast stone caps. Three hip roof dormers are visible with the front dormer filled with a paired wood louvered vent. There is a cast stone water table line visible around the house. The eaves are boxed. An irregular extension projects from the rear. [Photo #9]

36. PL 311 North Main Street 1872 Carpenter Gothic  
Holy Innocents' Episcopal Church

One-story, generally rectangular plan frame church in a vernacular variant of the Carpenter Gothic style with a steeply pitched front facing gable roof of composition shingles in a random pattern on brick piers with a stucco finish. The projecting front facing gable entry porch is supported by paired wood box columns with capitals and bases which support a gothic arch in the gable. Both the main roof and the entry porch roof are topped by wooden Celtic crosses. The façade is three-bay (W, D, W) with horizontal wood lap siding between wood buttresses. The front windows are Gothic arched wood double hung sash with leaded stained glass lights. The windows on the sides of the church are also 1/1 wood double hung sash with leaded stained glass lights without the Gothic arch. The entry door is double-leaf with six panels and set within a Gothic arch opening. Above the entry porch is a round wood frame window with a leaded stained glass light. The eaves are boxed and have decorative brackets. A one-story rectangular plan frame parish house addition, built in the 1960s, extends from the southwest transept. This church was listed on the National Register in 1987 and the architect was James B. Cook and the builder Andrew Johnson.

**Oak Ave**

37. C 100 Oak Avenue 1954 Ranch

One-story, brick veneer Ranch with three side facing gable roofs of a composition shingles on a concrete block foundation. A partial width undercut entry porch under the highest and central gable is supported by wood Tuscan columns on a brick porch deck with brick steps. The façade is four-bay (W-paired, W-tripled, D, W-paired). Windows are 6/6 wood double hung sash with the outer two having applied louvered shutters. The front door is wood with four recessed panels with two upper lights. The eaves are boxed. There is a small shed extension at the rear and behind that is an attached carport supported by brick piers with an enclosed shed sided in composite wood lap siding.

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**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

**Summary**

The Como Commercial Historic District, located in Como, Mississippi, represents an example of commercial development in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century on land subdivided for commercial development around the railroad tracks and depot for the town. The district has a unique tapestry of commercial, religious, agricultural industrial, and residential buildings of different styles, sizes, and construction dates all in a small concentrated area which gives the district a unique pattern of development and character. The Como Commercial Historic District is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places for significance under criteria A in the area of community planning and development, and criteria C in the area of architecture. The period of significance is from 1872, the date of the earliest resource in the district, to 1958, fifty years prior to this nomination. The district's significance also derives from a concentration of buildings that illustrate not only the popular architectural styles of the period between 1872 and 1958, but also vernacular forms common at the time.

The history of the Como Commercial Historic District is closely tied to the railroad and agricultural development of the area around the city. The town grew and prospered from agriculture and the ability to export products via the railroad. The area of Como on the west side of the railroad tracks around the Como depot served as the center for commerce, religion, and other services for the townspeople of Como. As the town prospered the wood frame commercial buildings were replaced with more substantial brick commercial buildings. The structures in the commercial area of Como offer built proof of the eras in which the town expanded and the styles that were current in those eras.

**Development of Como as a Town**

The land on which the town of Como was developed was a small part of the lands that belonged to the Chickasaw Indians. Those lands were ceded to the state of Mississippi in 1832 through the first of two treaties. Eleven counties were formed from the territory including Panola County, where Como is located, on February 9, 1836. Panola is the Indian word for 'cotton'.<sup>1</sup>

In 1832, after the treaty with the Chickasaw Indians, Dr. George Tait was sent from Georgia by his father to look over the land ceded in the treaty. He stayed for several months in an Indian

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<sup>1</sup> History of Panola County, *Tate County Democrat*

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village in the location that was later to become the town of Como. Dr. Tait returned to Georgia for a short period, married, and then returned to the area he scouted earlier in Mississippi with additional family members. With his family members he settled in the area that was to become Como. Dr. Tait prospered and in 1840 bought all of the land where Como now stands and built a house in 1844<sup>2</sup>.

Originally the town of Como started out on a stage coach line further west from its current location. There was a small settlement on the stage coach line which had a post office called Como. The stop on the stage coach line was named for Lake Como in Italy as there was a beautiful lake near by the post office which resembled Lake Como.<sup>3</sup>

The Mississippi and Tennessee Railroad in 1856 proposed a new rail line that would have gone through Dr. Tait's house. As a stockholder of the railroad he did not like that idea and also disliked the idea of a rail line going east of this house as that would have disturbed his plantation operations. Dr. Tait agreed that the line could go west of his house although he would not give the railroad a deed to the property. In 1856 he donated the land for a line plus an area for a depot so he could control the growth.<sup>4</sup> When the depot for the railroad was constructed it was named Como Depot in 1857 for the nearby settlement of Como. The post office was eventually moved from the stage coach line to the new depot and the old settlement of Como dried up once development started occurring around the depot.

It was not until after Dr. Tait's death in 1865 that Como began to develop when his heirs started selling lots around the depot. He had been reluctant to sell lots while he was alive as he did not want to have a town around him. A road was platted along the west side of the railroad tracks with lots divided on the west side of the street leaving the east side of the street for the depot. The road was originally named West Railroad Avenue and by 1897 was renamed Main Street. With businesses and development springing up the town of Como was incorporated in 1882.

The early development in Como centered around the depot which was built on the west side of the railroad tracks with a large platform for cotton. The farm lands around Como produced a good deal of cotton which was exported from the Como depot. To serve the railroad and growing commerce in Como, frame buildings began springing up for commerce and trade. There

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<sup>2</sup> Panola County Genealogical and Historical Society. *History of Panola County, Mississippi*, p. 12, 502.

<sup>3</sup> McCurdy, Merle N., *Towns Located on Highway 51*, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Panola County Genealogical and Historical Society. *History of Panola County, Mississippi*, p. 502.

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was even a frame Episcopal Church constructed in 1872 to serve the Como community. The Holy Innocents Episcopal Church survives to this day and is located at 311 North Main Street (#36). It was designed by James B. Cook, an English architect based in Memphis. He designed the church in the Carpenter Gothic style and it is one of the most important churches of that style in the state. Due to its importance was listed in the National Register in 1987.

By 1886 the population was 400 and there were numerous buildings for general merchandise, grocery, lumber, and cotton seed warehouses.<sup>5</sup> There were even six two-story buildings at the time. In 1895 fire broke out on Main Street and decimated numerous commercial buildings.<sup>6</sup> By 1897 the commercial buildings that burned were replaced by new brick buildings including the buildings from 219 to 225 North Main Street (#26 - #29) which remain to this day. By 1897 the population had increased to 700.<sup>7</sup>

Around 1899 an important commercial building was constructed at 215 Main Street (#24a) designed by architect Andrew Johnson. Johnson was Swedish born and trained in architecture in Sweden before coming to Mississippi in 1865. He was a prolific architect who designed many homes, churches, depots, and commercial buildings in north Mississippi. According to the multiple property National Register nomination of 'The Architecture of Andrew Johnson in Mississippi' he "brought a degree of architectural sophistication to the primary vernacular tradition of north central Mississippi."<sup>8</sup> The commercial building at 215 North Main Street is the only building remaining of his commercial work in north Mississippi with significant integrity.<sup>9</sup>

Between 1890 and 1909 thirty percent of the buildings in the district were constructed with an additional twenty-three percent built between 1910 and 1919. This growth in the number of buildings being built or replacing earlier frame buildings is mainly due to the successful exportation of agricultural goods. In fact there was even an Opera House in Como located on Elder Frank Ward Street that shows up on the 1911 Sanborn map. Unfortunately, it burned and was not rebuilt. There was also a hotel in the district on North Main Street next to the Episcopal Church that served railroad passengers and shows up on the 1897 Sanborn map and on the successive maps through 1918. After that it was replaced with a Colonial Revival style residential structure which survives to this day at 309 North Main Street (#35). This period of

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<sup>5</sup> 1886 Sanborn Map for Como.

<sup>6</sup> Panola County Genealogical and Historical Society. *History of Panola County, Mississippi*, p. 12.

<sup>7</sup> 1897 Sanborn Map for Como.

<sup>8</sup> *The Architecture of Andrew Johnson in Mississippi National Register Nomination*.

<sup>9</sup> Historic Sites Survey, Popular Price Store.

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growth in Como also included the construction of a new and grand Methodist church in the district. The Como Methodist Church located at 101 North Main Street (#5) was constructed in 1912 as the third Methodist church on the site. The new church was built of brick in the Neo-Classical style with a grand stair to a raised entrance and a large dome with a cupola and cross.

Throughout the history of Como there have been agricultural and industrial uses along Elder Frank Ward Street as evidenced by the different years of Sanborn maps for Como. This included accessory buildings constructed on the rear of properties facing North Main Street and buildings constructed on the west side of Elder Frank Ward Street. According to the Sanborn maps there have been cotton seed warehouses, lumber yards, livery stables, ice house, and other warehouses. There are still some vestiges of those uses that remain today with two wood frame metal clad warehouses behind 215 North Main Street (#24b) built around 1910 and one behind 221 North Main Street (#27b) built around 1930. There is also a large concrete building at 306 Elder Frank Ward Street (#3) constructed around 1935 that served as a seed warehouse and was later used for lumber storage. It was constructed with open bays on the interior facing an interior courtyard. There is an exception to the buildings for agricultural and industrial uses along Elder Frank Ward Street with a house located at 308 Elder Frank Ward Street (#4). The lot the house sits on was purchased around 1881 for the construction of a rectory for the Holy Innocents Episcopal Church across the street.<sup>10</sup> The original rectory burned in 1919 and a new one was constructed in the Craftsman/Bungalow style designed by architect John Johnson of Sardis. That building remains to this day with little change to the exterior.

Interestingly a town hall for Como does not show up until the 1918 Sanborn map suggesting that if there was an earlier town hall it was probably in a building with another use. In 1918 the town hall shows up on Elder Frank Ward Street; however, around 1935 a new city hall was constructed south of the railroad depot along the railroad tracks at 204 North Main Street (#17). It also housed the fire department. The building is now the police station for Como.

During World War II Como benefited economically from a 1300 acre prisoner of war camp located two miles south of Como. Although no new buildings were constructed in the Como Commercial Historic District because of the camp; it certainly had a large part in keeping the existing businesses operational and the railroad in frequent use. The camp was closed after the war ended and the land was sold. There was not much construction of buildings after World War II in the district; however, the Como Clinic was constructed at 103 North Main Street (#6)

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<sup>10</sup> Panola County Genealogical and Historical Society. *History of Panola County, Mississippi*, p. 121.

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around 1950 when a doctor was recruited from outside of Como to run the clinic which still operates today in the same building.

With the ending of passenger rail service to Como in the 1950s and freight service in the 1960s the railroad decided to demolish the railroad depot in the 1970s. It was the depot that determined the location for the town of Como and played such an important part in the development of the town over the years.

**Conclusion**

Today the northern Mississippi town of Como is much as it was in the early twentieth century when the majority of buildings remaining today were constructed to handle the commerce related to the railroad and the steady export of agricultural products from the area around Como. In the district, commercial buildings of different sizes and styles were built along with churches, residential and public buildings all to handle the daily business of the small town of Como from its early beginnings to today.

The Como Commercial Historic District is certainly a unique commercial district in Mississippi and one that visually expresses the growth of Como from its early days as a railroad stop to an agricultural exporter that helped the commercial buildings and center of Como grow to what it is today. Buildings of different styles of architecture from circa 1872 to the present survive, giving the Como Commercial Historic District a diverse mix of significant historic structures which give Como its unique historic character.



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**GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

Verbal Boundary Description: The district boundaries are delineated on the accompanying map.

Boundary Justification: The district includes a group of contiguous commercial, religious, and residential buildings that represent the historic and architectural development of the commercial area on Como during the period of significance, 1872 - 1958.

**PHOTOGRAPHS**

The following information is the same for all photographs:

- 1.) Como Commercial Historic District
- 2.) Panola County, Mississippi
- 3.) David Preziosi, Mississippi Heritage Trust
- 4.) January, 2008
- 5.) Mississippi Department of Archives and History

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|----------------------|---|
| <b>Photo 1 of 9:</b> | 1.) 306 Elder Frank Ward Street, E façade and N elevation |
|                      | 6.) view to SW  |
| <b>Photo 2 of 9:</b> | 1.) 101 North Main Street, E façade and S elevation       |
|                      | 6.) view to NW  |
| <b>Photo 3 of 9:</b> | 1.) 109 North Main Street, E façade                       |
|                      | 6.) view to SW  |
| <b>Photo 4 of 9:</b> | 1.) Streetscape, 200 block North Main Street              |
|                      | 6.) view to SSW   |
| <b>Photo 5 of 9:</b> | 1.) Streetscape, 200 block North Main Street              |
|                      | 6.) view to NW  |
| <b>Photo 6 of 9:</b> | 1.) 205 North Main Street, E façade                       |
|                      | 6.) view to NW  |
| <b>Photo 7 of 9:</b> | 1.) 209 North Main Street, E façade                       |
|                      | 6.) view to SW  |
| <b>Photo 8 of 9:</b> | 1.) 229 – 231 North Main Street, E façade                 |
|                      | 6.) view to SW  |

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

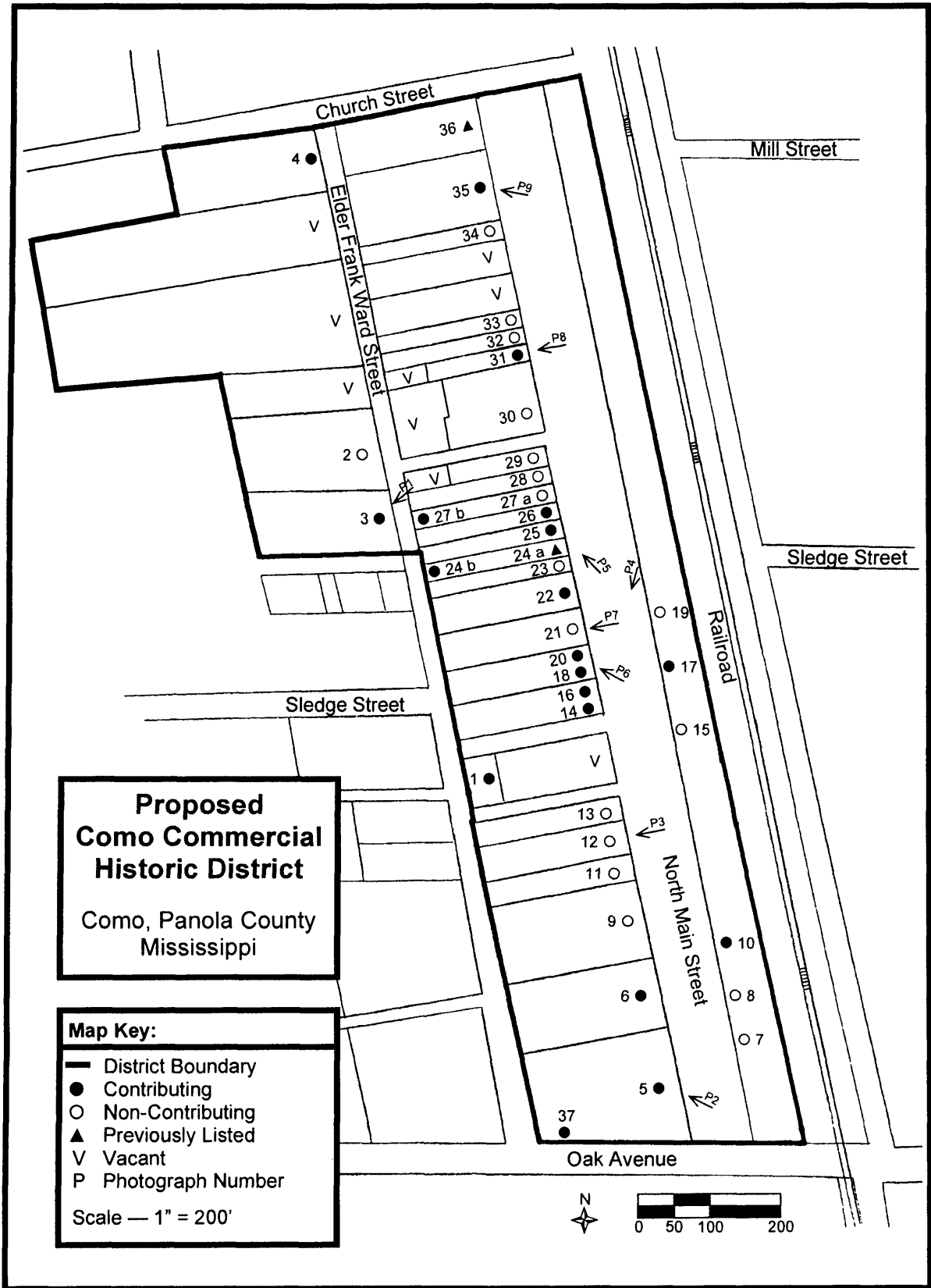
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Como Commercial Historic District  
Panola County, Mississippi

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- Photo 9 of 9:**
- 1.) 309 North Main Street, E façade
  - 6.) view to WNW



**Proposed  
Como Commercial  
Historic District**  
Como, Panola County  
Mississippi

**Map Key:**

- District Boundary
- Contributing
- Non-Contributing
- ▲ Previously Listed
- V Vacant
- P Photograph Number

Scale — 1" = 200'

